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ABSTRACT

This guide is designed to aid the teacher who has both Vietnamese and native American children in the classroom. It presents some language learning strategies based on a collection of Vietnamese folktales which have been adapted for elementary school children. It is divided into four parts: (1) suggested language/cultural learning activities; (2) summary of grammatical structures for each tale; (3) suggested cultural discussion for each tale; and (4) the folktales themselves. The first section is further divided into (1) English language learning activities; (2) Vietnamese language building activities; and (3) Multicultural activities. The first folktale is "The Sky Prince of Phu-Dong," for which a prototype lesson is presented that emphasizes regular and irregular past tense, imperatives, and passive voice. The other folktales are entitled "The Silver Stream" "Quan Trien and the Magic Coat," "The Magic Bamboo," "Tam and the Silver Slipper," and "Betel." (Author/CFM)

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BILINGUAL/BICULTURAL EDUCATION SERIES: A Model for Bilingual Language Skill Building

Introduction

Language learning, especially for younger children, need not be, and indeed should not be, laborious or painful. By using a little imagination and thorough preparations, the teacher can conduct classes which not only teach the child a new language, but which can also enrich the child's knowledge of himself, other people in his world, his own cultural traditions and the new culture whose language he is learning.

This short guide will present some language learning strategies based on a collection of Vietnamese folktales which have been adapted for elementary school children. (The vocabulary has been simplified to a fifth grade level except for certain words necessary to the context of the individual stories.) These folktales can be used for a number of learning activities. Not only will the Vietnamese child improve his English, but the native speaker of English can learn about a culture different from his own. Multicultural learning has several secondary advantages, one of which is that the Vietnamese child becomes the "resident expert" on Vietnamese culture and is quickly integrated into the class, an important factor in helping him to overcome the sort of alienation which often blocks learning.

The use of these folktales will also have the advantage of presenting English language learning in a truly meaningful context. By using these tales (and the suggested activities) the teacher will be able to teach <u>real</u> language and culture. The English-speaking child will learn about

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a new culture and the English-learning child will be able to use the language he has been learning.

This Guide is divided into four parts: 1) suggested language/culture learning activities; 2) summary of structures for each tale; 3) suggested cultural discussion for each tale; 4) the folktales themselves. The first section is further divided into a) English language learning activities; b) Vietnamese language building activities; c) Multicultural activities.

The National Indochinese Clearinghouse is indebted to Ms. Nancy Helen Barron of Santa Barbara, California for her translation and simplification of the Vietnamese folktales included in this Guide.

1. SUGGESTED LANGUAGE/CULTURE LEARNING ACTIVITIES

A. English Language Learning Activities

To demonstrate ways in which these tales might be used in a regular classroom, we have developed a prototype English language lesson based on the story "The Sky Prince of Phu-Dong". We have also listed further language arts activities suitable for the multilingual classroom. They include exercises in vocabulary development, listening comprehension, oral production and writing.

For stories other than "The Sky Prince of Phu-Dong" we have noted which structures may best be taught for each, as well as the structures which have been taught in other stories and may be reviewed. When using the stories remember to limit yourself to only a few of the structures used. If the stories are overworked, the pupils will soon lose interest in them and their particularly valuable contribution, making the language come to life, will be lost.

THE SKY PRINCE OF PHU-DONG--Folktale and Prototype Lesson

I.

Long ago Vietnam was a kingdom called Van-Lang, ruled by King Hung Vuong VI. The peaceful kingdom was often attacked by the warlike tribes of An. The invaders were so strong that the army of King Hung could not

win against them. Everywhere the invaders went they burned houses, left children without mothers and fathers, and forced men to become soldiers. The very sun grew red with pain, the rivers became angry, and the forest birds would not sing.

The King finally sent messengers throughout the land looking for a special man who could defeat the invaders. The royal messengers went to the North, but found no one there. They traveled South, but no one answered the call. They went East; there was no one there either. They hoped to find help in the West, but no help was to be found. All the messengers became very tired. The horses could hardly lift their feet. The trumpets could hardly sound another note.

In the small village of Phu-Dong, the King's messengers held a meeting. They decided that they were not going to find anyone to rescue them here, either.

II.

Now in Phu-Dong there lived a woman with her three-year old son. Unlike other children his age, he could not speak or sit up straight. His father had died when he was very young and he had never been given a name. Since his mother had to go to the market every day to earn their living, she left him home alone, hanging in a bamboo basket slung between the bamboo rafters. Thus the boy was called "Giong", which, in Vietnamese, means "eaves" or "rafters".

When he heard the royal trumpet blow that day, Giong stood up and said:

"Mother, I would like to speak with the messenger of the King."

Giong's mother was very surprised at the sudden change in her son. As one of the royal messengers came by, his horse whinnied loudly and knelt down at first sight of the child. The messenger was surprised to find himself standing before such a small boy.

"Well, what do you want?"

"Deliver my words to His Majesty: 'Worry no more. I will drive back the warlike tribes of An'".

Giong's voice rang out like thunder, and the messenger paid attention to his words.

"How many soldiers will you need?" asked the messenger.

"None. Tell the King to have an iron horse made for me, and a sword of shining steel, as well." The royal messenger rode like the wind back to the court of the King. His fine horse raced onward, and the trees along the roadside sang in the breeze as they passed by.

III.

At once the King called a thousand ironsmiths to him and had them make a giant horse, nearly as high as a mountain, and a giant sword of steel, as well. Soon the iron horse was ready. It was so heavy, it had to be wheeled away on a huge cart. The sword shone so brilliantly in the sun, no one could keep his eyes on it for long. Pulled by elephants and led by the palace guard, the cart with the horse and sword finally reached the village of Phu-Dong.

Giong received them, saying. "Tell His Majesty I am grateful for the fine horse and sharp sword. Peace will soon return to the whole land."

He then ate three huge bowls of rice, which his mother and neighbors brought to him. He stretched and stretched and stretched three times, until he stood as tall as a giant, and the whole village lay in his shadow. Giong raised his sword to his forehead and bowed his head, as he took leave from his mother and the villagers.

His mother looked at him with love in her eyes as if he were still a baby on her lap. "Dear Son," she said, "You have become a saint. Listen to the call of our King. Serve our people. Save our land."

"I will do as you say, Mother," replied Giong.

Three times he slapped the back of his iron horse, which gave a loud whinny. Then he jumped upon the horse, which galloped off on iron hooves.

IV.

On the battlefield, the sword moved with the flash of lightening and the force of thunder. The horse ran like the wind--forward, backward, left and right--as though no men stood in the way at all. A great number of the soldiers of An were killed. The sword grew fiery red with the heat of action. Suddenly, it stuck in a huge stone and broke off.

Giong uprooted a stalk of bamboo growing nearby, and with that he killed his attackers. The iron horse spit fire which burned the enemy, hair, beard and all. The rest of the bamboo nearby was also burned and the charred stumps remain to this day on the site of the ancient battlefield. The iron horse was so strong and active, that even the soldiers of An standing on the mountain far from the battlefield itself were struck down. And where Giong and the horse rode by, the giant footsteps formed pools, which are there to this very day.

V.

The army of An was wiped out. Giong rode back to a hilltop not far from his home town. He saw for the last time his village lying there below, where the villagers gathered around his house looked up at him. He took off his battle shirt, a gift from the King, and left it behind on the hill. He nodded once more in the direction of his earthly home. With horse and sword he went up into the heavens. He did not want any earthly reward. Later King Hung-Vuong gave him the title of "Sky Prince". But the people still call him simply "Thanh Giong" (Saint Giong), in fond memory of his childhood, when he lay in a basket, slung between the rafters.

* * * *

It should be noted that the suggested drills that follow are given as samples or prototypes of what can be done with folktales. They are not meant as full exercises, or as primary English language learning material. The drills are based on the structures found in the tales and should be used to supplement a sequenced text.

Three structures found in "The Sky Prince of Phu-Dong" will be used for our sample lesson: the past tense, especially in its irregular forms, the imperative, and the passive voice. Before the story can be used to its fullest, the teacher must insure that the pupils understand these forms and their use. The drills that follow should not be used all at one time, but rather during several different lessons since a large amount of material is covered.

a. <u>The Past Tense: Regular</u>

It may prove somewhat difficult to teach the past tense structures to Vietnamese pupils because, while the idea of previous action exists in

Vietnamese, it is indicated in a wholly different way from our use of suffixes and/or auxiliaries. Rather, the speaker of Vietnamese will depend upon context to indicate pastness or he will use an "auxiliary" in the sentence, but with the verb unchanged.

To begin with, select a verb from the story: call or raise. After demonstrating the meaning of the word, shift the pupils' attention to the past tense. Contrast the two sentences:

The King calls a thousand smiths to him.
The King called a thousand smiths to him.
and
Giong raises his sword.
Giong raised his sword.
and
His mother looks at him.
His mother looked at him.

Do similar kinds of exercises with other regular verbs.

Change to past tense:
I nod my head to say "yes".
The soda foams in the glass.
The rubber band stretches around the papers.
We form two teams to play soccer.
My class recieves an award from the principal.
I raise my hand to ask a question.

All of these sentences, can be easily demonstrated in the classroom. Further, all of the verbs are found in the story "The Sky Prince of Phu-Dong". The pattern being drilled should be thoroughly practiced orally first. Only then write the words on the board, so that spelling forms can be demonstrated.

Rewrite the paragraph inserting the correct verb:

lived passed called reached traveled

I ( ) in New York last year. In the summer I ( ) to Chicago. On the trip, I ( ) through Cincinnati. When I ( ) Chicago, I ( ) my uncle.

b. Past Tense: Irregular

After the pupils have practiced this formation and use of the past tense, introduce some irregular verbs. These verbs are especially important, because they are so common and so many of the verbs used during the school day are irregular (and appear in the story): was, went, lost, found, held, left, heard, gave, ate, rode, brought, stood, lay, took, broke.

Irregular past tense forms must be memorized because they are not related to simple forms in a predictable way. There are approximately 130 of them in all, and, as we mentioned, many are among the most frequently used words in the language.

By the time that the pupils have worked through the above exercises, they should understand that past action is indicated by changing the verb. Explain that while this is often done by adding "ed" to the verb, sometimes the word changes in a much more radical and less predictable way, or may even remain the same.

The pupils should already be familiar with the verbs "to be" and "to have", which change in both the present and the past tense. You might wish to do a quick review of these in order to show the pupils that they already know some of these unpredictable verbs:

Giong has a sword.
The King has many messengers.
They have many things to do.
"The Sky Prince" is a Vietnamese story.
There is a Vietnamese boy in our class.
The horses are tired.

Change the above sentences to the past tense.

Now, introduce other irregular verbs:

Giong eats three bowls of rice.
Giong <u>ate</u> three bowls of rice.
The invaders are very powerful.
The invaders <u>were</u> very powerful.
His mother goes to Phu-Dong.
His mother <u>went</u> to Phu-Dong.

She hangs the basket from the rafters.
She hung the basket from the rafters.
He brings peace to the people.
He brought peace to the people.
The people hear the trumpet.
The people heard the trumpet.

c. Negatives

After working with these two tenses, some attention should be given to negatives.

The horses are not hungry.
Giong is not a hero.
I am not Vietnamese.
We are not happy.

The same formation is used in the past tense:

The horses were not hungry, etc.

d. Questions

One possible yes/no question exercise is as follows:

Does Giong have a sword?
Yes, he does.
No, he doesn't. (does not)
Are the people happy?
Yes, they are.
No, they aren't. (are not)
Did you eat rice?
Yes, I did.
No, I didn't. (did not)

e. Imperatives

In Vietnamese there are two forms for the imperative. One is formal and indicates politeness and the other is informal. In English we have only one form of the imperative.

To familiarize your younger pupils with the imperative forms, you might want to play "Simon Says" or a similar game. For older children, a chain

drill will be useful:

Teacher: (To class)	Stand up.
(Children do so)	
Teacher:	Sit down.
(Children do so)	
Teacher:	Fred, stand up.
(Fred stands up)	
Teacher:	Go to the door.
	Go back to your seat.
	Sit down.
	Fred, ask Quynh-Hoa to give you the book.
Fred:	Give me the book.
(Quynh-Hoa does so)	
Teacher:	Bounthavy, ask Fred to give someone else the book.
Bounthavy:	Give the book to Louise, then ask her to pass it.
Fred:	Ingrid, give the book to Quang.
etc.	

This sort of chain drill can be used with other action words, until all of the pupils have demonstrated that they understand the imperative forms.

f. The Passive Voice

The passive voice will pose special problems for Vietnamese students because a parallel structure does not exist in Vietnamese. You must make sure that the pupils understand the formation of the past tense of "to be" and the past participles of other verbs.

For this kind of exercise, which is essentially one of moving parts of the sentence around, you might wish to construct a flannel-graph with moveable cards, each in a different color, depending upon the word function, so that you can graphically show the pupils that what is involved is the shifting of parts, with the addition of a form of "be". Using colored cards construct an active voice sentence on the flannel-graph:

Bill moved the book.

Show the pupils that Bill is the person doing the action, and the action is being done on or to the book. Then:

The book was moved.

Explain that the two sentences mean virtually the same thing: the book is no longer in the same place. But now, the book is the most important element of the sentence.

Finally: The book was moved by Bill.

We now have all of the elements of the original sentence, but it is expressed differently.

Exercises: Change to Past tense, then to Passive:

1. The King calls the smiths.
2. Giong eats the rice.
3. The smiths make the iron horse.
4. The hero defeats the enemy.

By the time the children have drilled these patterns, and are able to understand and use them, you will want to begin vocabulary development, aimed at the story to be taught. A bilingual aide will be most useful here. The aide can gloss the stories, simply telling the children what the corresponding word in Vietnamese is. (Many of the words in the story may also be new to your pupils whose native language is English.) The following list of activities suggest things to do to 1) check the children's comprehension of the story; 2) enrich the experience of learning the story, both for the ESL pupils and for the native English speaker; 3) expand the pupils' understanding of English.

* * * *

Suggested Language Arts Activities

The following are some suggested language arts activities which can be used for pupils learning English. Some of the activities are appropriate for native speakers of English as well.

Vocabulary development:

1. Some action words can be changed to "names":

   farm--farmer invade--invader fight-fighter

2. Some words are made from two words:

   battle / field iron / smith war / like

3. Some words mean about the same as other words:

   struck down--killed hoof--foot eave--rafter rage--anger

Listening:

1. Have a story hour, using illustrations so that all the pupils can understand the story. Afterwards, the pupils can draw, paint or make collages which illustrate different aspects of the story.

Speaking:

1. Play "Simon Says" or "Mother, May I?" to get children to use the imperative.
2. On colored cards, print new vocabulary words. Help the pupils construct sentences, and then change them into passive sentences.
3. Tell a continuing story. One child begins telling the story and then turns to another child who goes on with the story. A variation on this is to give each child a card with a vocabulary word printed on it which he must use in his segment of the story.

Writing:

1. Using the folktales as a base, ask the pupils to write short plot outlines or summaries of the story, first in the present tense, then in the past tense.
2. Write a different ending for the story or develop some aspect of it more fully.

Drama:

1. After being sure that the children all understand the action, divide the class into groups. Each group will prepare a skit which either tells part of the story, changes the story, or emphasizes a different part of the story. Present the skits to the whole class and talk about each one.

B. Vietnamese Language Building Activities

The following are some suggested language arts activities for use by the bilingual side with the Vietnamese version of the folktales. These ideas are not intended for any specific grade level. They can be used at any level depending on the ability of your children.

I. Pronunciation:

Have children practice spelling and pronouncing the new words.

II. Vocabulary:

1. Identify the new Vietnamese vocabulary in the story.
2. Explain the new vocabulary.
3. Find synonyms and antonyms for selected vocabulary items.
4. Classify the new words (nouns, verbs, adjectives etc.).
5. Use the new words in sentences.

III. Word Order and Comprehension:

1. Mix up word order of sentences and have children arrange them in proper order (you may want to use different color cards for different parts of sentence.)
2. Have children paraphrase each paragraph using their own words.
3. After dividing story by paragraphs:
   a. Have children illustrate each paragraph and place in proper order.
   b. Pass out paragraphs to children; teacher begins story; have students read aloud their paragraphs in sequential order.
4. Summarize the story in two or three sentences.
5. Pick out a short paragraph for dictation.

B. CÁC HOẠT ĐỘNG XÂY DỰNG NGỮ PHÁP VIỆT-NAM:

Sau đây là một vài ý kiến về hoạt động ngữ thuật để giúp giáo sư song ngữ soạn bài tập cho học sinh trong giờ đọc truyện cổ tích. Những câu hỏi này không nhằm một trình độ riêng biệt nào. Giáo sư có thể dùng cho bất cứ lớp nào tùy theo trình độ học sinh.

I. PHÁT ÂM:

Cho học sinh đánh vần và phát âm những chữ mới.

II. NGỮ VỰNG:

1. Tìm chữ mới trong bài.
2. Giải thích chữ mới.
3. Tìm đồng nghĩa và phản nghĩa cho một số ngữ vựng.
4. Phân loại chữ mới (danh từ, động từ, tĩnh từ v.v...)
5. Đặt câu với chữ mới.

III. CÚ PHÁP VÀ TẬP LÀM CÂU:

1. Đảo lộn thứ tự của chữ trong câu và cho học sinh sắp lại theo đúng thứ tự. (Có thể dùng bìa cứng nhiều màu khác nhau cho mỗi loại chữ, thí dụ màu trắng cho chủ từ, xanh cho động từ v.v...).
2. Hướng dẫn học sinh viết lại mỗi đoạn bằng lời riêng của chúng.
3. Sau khi phân chia câu chuyện ra làm nhiều đoạn:
   a. Cho học sinh diễn tả từng đoạn bằng tranh vẽ và sắp các tranh vẽ theo thứ tự câu chuyện.
   b. Giao cho mỗi học sinh đọc một đoạn ngắn. Giáo sư bắt đầu đọc lớn đoạn thứ nhất và học sinh đọc những đoạn tiếp nối theo thứ tự.
4. Tóm lược câu chuyện trong hai hay ba câu.
5. Đọc một đoạn ngắn cho học sinh viết chính tả.

C. Multicultural Activities

1. Rewrite the story in a different cultural setting. A Chicano child might write about Mexico, a Native American child might be able to set the story in a different context. An Anglo child might set the story either in contemporary America or in a setting which reflects his cultural background (German, English, Swedish). Remember, the action should be roughly the same. Then, talk about the stories with the children. How are the stories different? How are they the same?
2. Every culture has stories about heroes who help people with no thought for themselves, or about people who are examples of goodness, honesty, helpfulness, etc. Sometimes these stories are about real people (Jose Marti, Sun Yat-sen, W.E.B. DuBois, the Trung Sisters or Clara Barton); sometimes they're "made up". Think of stories from other cultures which parallel the stories given here. Divide the pupils into groups, each of which will find one story and will choose a way (skit, collage, pictures or story hour) to share their finding with the class.
3. Make a world map, coloring in the countries from which the pupils, or their ancestors have come. Find out something about each of these countries, illustrating interesting facts, national costume, etc., on little cards, tacked to the wall and connected by yarn to the map.

2. A SUMMARY OF GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURES FOR EACH TALE

The Vietnamese folktales which follow may be used for a variety of interesting, exciting, and purposeful activities. Each of the stories presents a variety of structures, any one of which the ESL teacher may wish to emphasize. The following list is designed to give you an idea of the structures that can be worked with in each of the folktales.

Although the stories, as teaching units, function independently of one another, we have arranged them in a sequence which enables the teacher to introduce new material in each lesson and to review material which was taught with an earlier tale. You may find, though, that some other arrangement meets your needs more fully.

1. "The Silver Stream": New: 1) Plurals (regular & irregular): fairies
stars
days
children

2) Possessives: Emperor's daughter
of the Emperor daughter's
hard

3) Possessive adjectives and pronouns:
his buffalo
hers

2. "Quan Trien and the Magic Coat": New: 1) Continuous past tense:
"He was playing a flute"
"While he was resting, he heard"
(as background action)

2) Two part verbs: came to
sat down
went back

3) Direct speech: "Come here", the
old man said.

Review: 1) Regular/irregular past tense

2) Possessive adjectives and pronouns

3. "The Magic Bamboo" New: 1) Coordinating conjunctions: and still the
farmer said nothing.

2) Subordinate conjuctions: ...since his wife
had died...
...So the farmer hired...
...if he is here...

3, Past perfect tense: they had died
the farm had prospered
he had lived

Review: 1) Imperatives: go and find
bring me

2) Two part verbs: look forward to
look around
send into

4. "Tam and the Silver Slipper": New: 1) Relative pronouns:
...who lived far away.
...who this pretty stranger was.
...where she slept.
...which always came true.
...what the lady told her.

Review: 1) Possessives

2) Direct speech

5. "Betel" New: Passive voice: Mother and father had been killed.
he was changed into

Review: past, present and past perfect tenses
two-part verbs
prepositional phrases

3. SUGGESTED CULTURAL DISCUSSION FOR EACH TALE

1. The Silver Stream.

a. Many cultures include in their folklore tales based on the stars. The Greeks gave most of the constellations the names we know them by today. The American Indians also had stories about the heavenly bodies.

b. Where is the Milky Way in the night sky? Does it look "milky" to you, or can you more easily imagine it a "silver stream"?

c. With which month in our calendar does the month of Ngau correspond? Is it a rainy month where you live?

2. Quan Trien and the Magic Coat.

a. In this story, the Vietnamese people built a temple in honor of a mortal, who had done good deeds.
In what similar ways do we honor the dead, who have done deeds of service, in the Western world?

b. When does the Festival of Quan Trien take place? How is it observed?

3. The Magic Bamboo.
   a. How do the marriage customs described in this story compare to those in America?
   b. What stories in Western culture deal with the marriage of a poor man to the daughter of a rich man? How are they similar to this tale?

4. Tam and the Silk Slipper.
   a. Does this story sound familiar to Westerners, too? (It is similar to our version of "Cinderella". This is a common story motif in cultures throughout the world. It is said to exist in some variation in over 200 languages.)
   b. Discuss with the class the image of "stepmother" in such tales.

5. Betel.
   a. Discuss the chewing of Betel in Vietnam. (It has had deep significance for many years. Over the centuries it has indicated signs of a good host, if he offers freshly prepared Betel to his guests. The offering of this mixture is an invitation to conversation or confidence and at times in history has even signified the proposal of marriage.)
   b. Discuss similar tales and rituals in other cultures; (American Indian folklore is a a good source.)

4. THE FOLKTALES

Only the first two tales have been re-translated into Vietnamese (of a grade school level) as examples of uses of the tales.

A. THE SILVER STREAM

In Vietnam, when the nights are very clear and bright, the children play a game. "One star, two stars, three stars, four..." they count as far as they can. But in the Milky Way, there are too many stars to count one by one. All together, the stars look like a silver stream. Then the children think of a story grandmother tells.

* * * * *

Once upon a time, the Jade Emperor ruled the sky. He had a beautiful daughter named Chuc Nu. She was not only beautiful, but talented as well. She taught the sky fairies to dance, to sing and to play music. She wove silk cloth for their dresses. She worked very hard all day long. She sat at her loom beside the silver stream. Sometimes she sang a happy song while she worked.

On the other side of the stream lived a handsome herdsman named Nguu Lang. He tended the Emperor's herd of buffalo. One day, he heard beautiful music from the other side of the stream. "Who is singing?" he asked himself.

Nguu Lang led the buffalo beside the stream to drink. He looked across the water. There on the other side of the stream he saw the Emperor's daughter at her loom. She sang a song as she wove silk cloth for the fairy's dresses.

At first she did not see Nguu Lang, because she was working very hard. But then she looked up and saw the handsome young man. He watched her while she worked, and he listened while she sang.

The days passed quickly. On this side of the silver stream Chuc Nu worked hard at her loom. On the other side, Nguu Lang tended the

Emperor's buffalo. Sometimes when Chuc Nu looked up from her weaving, she saw Nguu Lang looking at her. The daughter of the Jade Emperor and the herdsman fell in love.

When the Jade Emperor saw this, he said to the handsome young man, "You are a good herdsman. You work hard. You would be a good son. You may have my daugther's hand in marriage." Soon there was a big wedding feast.

Chuc Nu and Nguu Lang were very happy together. But suddenly they did not want to work anymore. The herdsman did not want to tend the Emperor's buffalo, and the Emperor's daughter did not want to weave silk cloth.

"We want to take a wedding trip," they said to the Jade Emperor. So they left their work and set off across the sky. They were gone a very long time.

The Jade Emperor waited and waited and waited. But his daughter and her husband did not come back. There was no one to do the work. There was no one to tend the herd of buffalo and there was no one to weave silk cloth. He waited and he waited. But his children did not come home.

At last the Jade Emperor sent a messenger to bring Chuc Nu and Nguu Lang home. Then he said to them, "My Children, why did you not come home? There was no one to do your work. That was very bad, and now I must punish you. Chuc Nu, you must return to your loom on this side of the silver stream. Nguu Lang, you must return to your buffalo on the other side of the stream. Only during the seventh month of the year, the month of Ngau, may you cross the stream and be together."

The young people were very unhappy. But there was nothing they could say. The Jade Emperor was right. They must do what he said.

Now they live just like they lived before. Chuc Nu works every day at her loom. Sometimes she sings a sad and beautiful song. Nguu Lang lives on the other side of the stream. He tends the Emperor's buffalo. When the buffalo drink beside the water, the herdsman watches his wife at her loom, and he listens to her sing.

They always look forward to the seventh month, when they may be

together. Then they are happy. But one month is not a very long time. Nguu must return home again soon. Then the young people are very said.

When it is time to say "Goodbye", their tears fall down to the Earth far below. We call it rain. That is why it rains in Vietnam during the seventh month of the year, during the month called Ngau.

When it rains in the month of Ngau, the ravens all fly away from the Earth. Where do they go? They all fly up into the sky. Together they make a bridge across the silver stream. Then Nguu Lang may walk over to the other side, where Chuc Nu waits for him.

A. GIẢI NGÂN HÀ

Ở Việt Nam, vào những đêm trời trong và sáng, trẻ em thường chỏi đếm sao: "Một ông sao sáng, hai ông sáng sao, ba ông sao sáng, bốn..." và cứ thế chúng đếm cho đến khi không còn đếm được nữa. Nhưng giải ngân hà thì đầy đặc nhiều sao, không ai đếm được từng ông. Muôn sao chi chít trông như một giòng nước bạc. Trẻ con thường nhớ đến câu chuyện cổ tích Bà kể cho nghe.

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Ngày xưa, có Đức Ngọc Hoàng ở trên trời. Ngài có một cô con gái thật đẹp tên là Chức Nữ. Không những cô đã đẹp lại còn có tài nữa. Cô dạy tiên nữ ở trên trời múa hát và đánh đàn. Cô dệt lụa để may áo cho họ mặc. Suốt ngày cô làm việc chăm chỉ. Cô thường ngồi ở khung cửi bên giòng sông Ngân, thỉnh thoảng cô cất tiếng hát vui vẻ. Vừa hát vừa làm việc.

Có một anh chăn trâu đẹp trai tên Ngưu Lang ở bên kia giòng sông. Anh săn sóc đàn trâu của Ngọc Hoàng. Một ngày nọ, anh nghe được tiếng hát rất hay từ bên kia sông, bèn tự hỏi:

- Ai hát nhỉ?

Ngưu Lang đem bầy trâu ra sông cho uống nước. Anh nhìn sang bên kia. Ở đó anh thấy cô con gái của Ngọc Hoàng ngồi bên khung cửi. Cô vừa dệt lụa để may áo cho tiên nữ, vừa ca hát.

Lúc đầu, quá chăm chú làm việc, Chức Nữ không nhìn thấy Ngưu Lang. Nhưng sau, nhìn lên thì bắt gặp cái nhìn của anh chàng trẻ tuổi đẹp trai. Anh nhìn ngắm nàng làm việc, và lắng nghe nàng ca hát.

Ngày tháng qua mau, ở bên này sông Ngân thì có Chức Nữ chăm chú làm việc bên khung cửi. Ở bờ bên kia thì có Ngưu Lang lo chăn dắt đàn

trâu của Ngọc Hoàng. Thỉnh thoảng khi nhìn lên Chức Nữ lại thấy Ngưu Lang nhìn mình. Cô con gái của Ngọc Hoàng và anh chăn trâu đã yêu nhau.

Khi Ngọc Hoàng thấy vậy, Ngài nói với anh chàng trai trẻ:

- Anh là người chăn trâu giỏi, anh làm việc siêng năng, anh sẽ là một người rể tốt. Ta cho phép anh cưới con gái Ta làm vợ.

Và ngay sau đó là một tiệc cưới lớn.

Chức Nữ và Ngưu Lang rất sung sướng bên nhau. Nhưng hai người tự dưng không muốn làm việc nữa. Anh chăn trâu không thích săn sóc đàn trâu của Ngọc Hoàng, và cô con gái của Ngọc Hoàng không còn muốn dệt lụa nữa. Họ thưa với Ngọc Hoàng:

- Chúng con muốn đi chơi tuần trăng mật.

Thế là họ rời bỏ công việc rồi ra đi. Họ đi và đi lâu lắm...

Ngọc Hoàng chờ đợi mãi, nhưng cô con gái của Ngài và chàng rể vẫn không thấy trở về. Không có ai làm công chuyện. Không có ai chăn dắt đàn trâu và không có ai dệt lụa. Ngài vẫn chờ, vẫn đợi, nhưng hai người con vẫn không thấy về.

Cuối cùng, Ngọc Hoàng phải sai người đi gọi Ngưu Lang và Chức Nữ về. Ngài nói với họ:

- Tại sao các con không về? Không có ai làm công việc của các con. Đó là một điều xấu. Ta phải trừng phạt các con. Chức Nữ, con phải trở về với khung cửi ở bên này giòng sông. Ngưu Lang, con phải trở về với đàn trâu của con ở bên kia giòng sông. Mỗi năm các con chỉ được sang sống để chung sống bên nhau vào tháng Bảy, tức là tháng Ngâu.

Cặp vợ chồng trẻ rất buồn rầu. Nhưng họ không nói gì được. Ngọc Hoàng có lý, họ phải làm y như lời Ngài dạy.

Bây giờ, cuộc sống của họ cũng như ngày xưa. Chức Nữ suốt ngày ngồi dệt lụa bên khung cửi. Thỉnh thoảng hát lên một bài hát buồn mà hay... Ngưu Lang ở bên kia giòng sông săn sóc đàn trâu của Ngọc Hoàng, khi đàn trâu uống nước thì anh nhìn người vợ ngồi bên khung cửi và lắng nghe tiếng hát của nàng.

Hai người trông mau cho đến tháng Bảy để được gần nhau. Lúc đó thì họ rất sung sướng. Nhưng một tháng qua ngắn ngủi. Rồi chàng Ngưu phải trở về chỗ cũ. Và rồi hai người trẻ tuổi lại buồn bã.

Khi đến lúc phải chia tay, nước mắt của họ rơi xuống tận quả đất. Chúng ta gọi là mưa. Đó là lý do tại sao trời thường mưa vào tháng Bảy ở Việt Nam, mưa suốt tháng Ngâu. Suốt mùa Ngâu bao nhiêu quạ đen ở dưới đất đều bay đi hết. Chúng bay đi đâu? Chúng bay lên trời. Chúng bắt thành một cây cầu qua sông Ngân và lúc đó, Ngưu Lang sẽ bước qua cầu và sang bên kia bờ, nơi mà Chức Nữ chờ đợi chàng...

B. QUAN TRIEN AND THE MAGIC COAT

Once upon a time there lived a fisherman named Quan Trien. He was very poor and had to work very hard. Every day he took his nets down to the stream to fish.

One hot day, he went down to the stream as usual and threw his nets into the water. Then he sat down in the shade of a tree. While he was resting, he heard beautiful music in the distance. It was the sound of a flute. The fisherman walked through the forest toward the sound. At last he came to a willow tree. An old man was sitting under the tree. He had long white hair and a white beard. He was playing a flute, made of bamboo. It was beautiful music indeed, almost magic.

When the old man saw Quan Trien, he stopped playing the flute. It was very still in the forest. The man gave Quan Trien some wine to drink, and the fisherman shared his dinner of rice and fish. While the two men were drinking and eating, they talked together. Soon they were like old friends.

In a little while, Quan Trien said, "I must return to my fishing nets."

Then the old man with the white hair said to him, "Here, I want to give you this coat as a present. It is a magic coat. When you put it on, no one can see you. You will be invisible."

Now, with his magic coat, Quan Trien had the chance to become a wealthy man. But he was generous and good. He wanted to help the other poor people.

So he put on his magic coat, and Presto! he was invisible. Then he went right into the King's storerooms and took baskets of rice, to give to all the poor people in the land. No one saw him go in. No one saw him come out! The next night he went back to the storerooms again. Every night he went back and took baskets of rice. All the poor people in the land had enough to eat, at last.

Soon the guards at the King's storerooms saw that some of the baskets of rice were gone each morning. But they didn't know who was taking them. Sometimes they heard sounds in the night, but they never

saw anyone go into the storerooms. And they never saw anyone come out. In the morning, they found serveral more baskets of rice gone. This happened night after night. The King became very angry.

One night, the fisherman Quan Trien tore a small hole in this magic coat. So he went to the tailor the very next morning. The tailor sewed a patch of silk cloth over the hole in Quan Trien's coat, and soon the coat was as good as new. This patch was a very special piece of cloth, because it had a beautiful silk butterfly sewn on it.

Now there was a new guard at the King's storerooms. That night, the new guard heard a sound in the storerooms. He knew that someone was taking baskets of rice. So he went inside to look. At first he couldn't see anyone. Then he saw a beautiful butterfly, near the baskets of rice. He quickly caught the butterfly in a net.

But you and I know, the butterfly was really Quan Trien. He was taking baskets of rice to give to the poor people. He had on his magic coat, but he was no longer invisible, because the silk butterfly wasn't invisible. Only the coat was magic.

So the guards caught the poor fisherman and threw him into prison. All the people in the land were very sad. Once again, they didn't have enough to eat.

Later, the King let Quan Trien go free. Then he became a soldier. He won many battles, because no one could see him in his magic coat. They only saw a beautiful butterfly.

After he died, the people built a temple in his honor. And even today, the Vietnamese have a festival every year, called the Festival of Quan Trien.

B. QUAN TRIEN VA CAI AO KHOAC MAU NHIEM

Ngày xưa, có một người đánh cá tên là Quan Triển. Anh rất nghèo và phải làm việc vất vả. Mỗi ngày anh đem lưới xuống sông đánh cá.

Một ngày nóng nực nọ, anh ra sông như thường lệ và quăng lưới xuống nước rồi đến ngồi dưới gốc cây có bóng mát. Trong lúc ngồi nghỉ, anh nghe có tiếng nhạc từ đằng xa. Đó là tiếng sáo. Người đánh cá đi lần về phía có tiếng sáo. Cuối cùng anh đến một cây liễu. Một ông già ngồi dưới gốc cây. Râu, tóc của ông đều bạc trắng. Ông đang thổi một ống sáo bằng tre. Tiếng sáo thật là kỳ ảo.

Khi nhìn thấy Quan Triển, ông già ngưng thổi sáo. Trong rừng thật là yên tĩnh. Ông già mời Quan Triển uống rượu. Người đánh cá mời ông già ăn bữa cơm với cá của mình. Trong khi ăn uống hai người chuyện trò. Không mấy chốc như là đôi bạn thân.

Một lúc sau, Quan Triển nói:

- Tôi phải trở về lưới cá của tôi.

Lúc ấy ông già với đầu tóc bạc trắng nói:

- Đây, tôi muốn cho anh cái áo khoác này làm quà. Đây là cái áo khoác mầu nhiệm. Khi mặc vào thì không ai trông thấy anh nữa. Anh sẽ trở thành vô hình.

Bây giờ, với cái áo khoác mầu nhiệm, Quan Triển có có [illegible] để trở nên một người giàu có. Nhưng anh là một người rộng rãi và tốt bụng. Anh muốn giúp đỡ những người nghèo khác.

Anh mặc chiếc áo vào, và hập! Anh trở thành vô hình. Anh đi vào kho chứa gạo của nhà vua và lấy nhiều thúng gạo đem ra chia cho tất cả người nghèo trong nước. Không ai nhìn thấy anh đi vào. Không ai nhìn thấy anh đi ra. Đêm sau anh trở lại kho gạo nữa. Và mỗi đêm anh ta

lại trở vào và lấy rất nhiều thúng gạo đem ra, và nhờ thế người nghèo trong nước có đủ gạo ăn.

Sau đó, lính gác kho gạo nhà vua để ý thấy mỗi sáng lại mất mấy thúng gạo. Nhưng họ không biết ai lấy. Họ cũng có nghe tiếng động trong đêm, nhưng họ không hề thấy ai đi vào trong kho cả, và họ cũng không hề thấy ai đi ra. Sáng ra lại thấy mất mấy thúng gạo nữa... Sự việc này xảy ra đêm này qua đêm khác. Nhà vua giận lắm.

Một đêm, anh Quan Triển đánh cá làm rách một lỗ nhỏ nơi áo. Anh đem đến thợ may ngay sáng hôm sau. Người thợ may lấy một miếng lụa vá vào chỗ rách và cái áo trở nên lành lặn như áo mới. Miếng vá này rất đặc biệt, vì có đính một con bướm bằng lụa.

Bấy giờ, người gác kho gạo nhà vua là một người lính mới. Đêm ấy anh ta nghe tiếng động trong kho. Anh biết là có người đang ăn cắp gạo. Anh bèn đi vào trong kho. Thoạt tiên anh không thấy ai cả. Rồi anh thấy một con bướm xinh đẹp gần mấy thúng gạo. Anh vội lấy cái lưới chụp con bướm.

Nhưng bạn và tôi chúng ta đều biết rằng con bướm kia chính là Quan Triển. Anh ta đang ăn cắp gạo phát cho người nghèo. Anh đang mặc cái áo khoác mầu nhiệm, nhưng anh không còn vô hình nữa. Vì con bướm bằng lụa không vô hình. Chỉ có cái áo khoác có tính cách mầu nhiệm thôi.

Và thế là anh lính gác đã bắt được người đánh cá nghèo và bỏ anh vào tù. Mọi người trong nước rất buồn, và một lần nữa họ không có đủ gạo ăn.

Về sau, vua thả Quan Triển ra. Anh đi lính. Anh thắng được nhiều trận nhờ mang cái áo khoác mầu nhiệm. Không ai thấy anh, họ chỉ thấy

một con búdm dẹp thoi.

Sau khi anh chết, người dân xây một ngôi đền để tưởng niệm, và cho đến ngày hôm nay người Việt-Nam mỗi năm vẫn làm lễ kỷ niệm gọi là Lễ Quan Triển.

C. THE MAGIC BAMBOO

In a small village in Vietnam, there once lived a farmer. He and his little daughter lived alone, since his wife had died several years before. The farm was too much work for the two of them, so the farmer hired a boy named Nho to help.

Nho was an orphan. Both of his parents died when he was very young. Since he had no home of his own, he lived at the farm. Nho was a good helper and worked hard. The farmer didn't pay him anything, but promised, "Do your very best work for me day after day, and at the end of five years, you shall have my daughter's hand in marriage." So Nho worked from sunrise to sunset every day for the farmer.

Five years passed quickly. With Nho's help, the farm prospered. The farmer built a new house with a large garden. There was even a pond for goldfish in the garden. It was a good life, indeed.

The farmer's little daughter had grown up, too. Now she was a beautiful young woman. One day, as the farmer sat in his garden watching her, he said to himself, "I will find her a handsome and wealthy young man for a husband. The people in the village will laugh at me if I let my daughter marry a poor orphan boy like Nho."

Meanwhile, she knew nothing of her father's promise. But she liked Nho very much. They had lived happily in the same house for many years, like brother and sister.

During this time, Nho had fallen in love with the farmer's daughter. He thought she was very beautiful. She was kind and good as well. He looked forward to the day when she would be his wife. And so, he worked very hard for the farmer.

Five years had passed, and still the farmer said nothing about his promise. Had he forgotten about it? He was looking around at the sons of his wealthy neighbors. At last he found a young man he liked.

In those days, parents arranged marriages for their children. The young people had nothing to say about it. The farmer did not ask his daughter if she liked this young man. She did not even know him. The two families set a day for the wedding party.

"On the wedding day," the farmer said to himself, "I will send Nho into the forest to gather wood. He must not stay at home. If he is here, he will ruin all my plans.

Early in the morning of the wedding day, he said to the orphan boy, "Nho, five years ago you came to work here. Now you shall have my daughter's hand in marriage. Go into the forest today and find a tall bamboo tree. It must have 100 joints. From this bamboo, we will make the chopsticks for the wedding feast." But this was only a trick.

Nho went into the forest. He looked and looked, but by noon he had not found a bamboo tree with 100 joints. The poor boy sat down and cried. He had worked hard for five long years, from sunrise to sunset, and still he could not marry the farmer's daughter.

Just then he looked up. There stood an old man with long white hair and a white beard. The old man asked, "Why are you crying, my Son?"

Nho told the old man everything. Then the stranger said to him, "Bring me 100 small pieces of bamboo." Nho soon found the bamboo and brought it to the old man.

Then the old man said:

Bamboo, Bamboo,
Bamboo,
Bind together!

And presto! there stood a bamboo pole, with 100 joints.

Quickly Nho set off toward home with it. But the pole was so long, he couldn't get it through the trees in the forest. Again the poor boy sat down and cried.

Just then he looked up. There stood the friendly old man. "Why are you crying now, my Son?"

"This bamboo pole is too long," said Nho. "I can't get through the forest."

The old man smiled and said:

Bamboo, Bamboo,
Bamboo,
Fall apart!

Suddenly the bamboo pole fell into 100 pieces. Nho quickly picked up

the pieces and set off for home.

Meanwhile at the farmer's house, the wedding party had started. The two families were all there, dressed in fine clothes. And on a long table in the garden, there was a whole feast. When the party was over, the farmer's daughter must go home with her new husband and his family.

Nho saw the feast as he came to the edge of the forest. He thought it was his own wedding party. He looked down at his own poor work clothes. "They are all dressed up," he said to himself, "How pretty the farmer's daughter looks today! But who is that young man beside her? I don't know him. And he is all dressed up, too. Why does he look so happy?"

Suddenly Nho understood everything. The farmer had cheated him. Nho had worked hard for five long years, from sunrise to sunset, all for nothing.

Then he looked at the 100 pieces of bamboo, which he had brought for the farmer. He said:

Bamboo, Bamboo,
Bamboo,
Bind together!

And Presto! there stood a bamboo pole with 100 joints.

The people at the party all saw this trick. The farmer came over to the orphan boy, to see this magic bamboo. But as soon as the farmer touched the pole, Nho said:

Bamboo, Bamboo,
Bamboo,
Bind together!

And Presto! the farmer was stuck fast to the bamboo.

The yound man in fine clothes came to help. But as soon as he touched the pole, Nho said:

Bamboo, Bamboo,
Bamboo,
Bind together!

Suddenly the young man was stuck fast to the bamboo, too.

Then the young man's father came to help. But as soon as the man touched the bamboo, Nho said:

Bamboo, Bamboo,
Bamboo,
Bind together!

Now all three men were stuck fast to the bamboo pole.

Everyone at the party cried "Help, help!" But they were afraid to do anything. No one came to help the three men, who were stuck fast to the magic bamboo.

At last the farmer said, "Let me go. Let us all go free. I will not cheat you now. I will keep my promise. You shall have my daughter for your wife.

The farmer's daughter was very happy when she heard this. She didn't want to marry the young man in fine clothes. She wanted to marry Nho. She had known him for five years, and she liked him very much.

Then Nho said the magic words again:

Bamboo, Bamboo,
Bamboo,
Break apart!

Crrrr--crash! The long bamboo pole fell into 100 pieces, and suddenly the three men fell to the ground. Then the wealthy young man and his father and his family all went home. There was nothing to say. The farmer and his daughter and Nho stayed at the farm together.

Soon after that, Nho married the farmer's beautiful daughter. How happy they were! It was a good life, indeed.

Many years later, the old farmer sat outside in the garden, day after day. And he was happy just to watch his grandchildren play.

D. TAM AND THE SILK SLIPPER

Once upon a time there was a little girl named Tam, who lived with her mother and father. They were very happy together. But then one day Tam's mother died. Tam was very sad. Her father said, "I must find a new wife." Soon he married again. His new wife had another daughter, whose name was Cam. The stepmother was jealous of Tam, who was more beautiful than her own daughter.

Tam's stepmother was mean to her and made her do all the hard and dirty work around the house. Tam worked from sunrise to sunset. When the day was over, and she was tired from head to toe, she had only a mat to sleep on in the kitchen.

Poor little Tam was so unhappy. But she never complained, and she cried only when she was alone.

Sometimes when she went into the forest to gather wood for the fireplace, she stopped to rest and to talk with the birds. They were all her friends. But she could never stay for very long, because there was always work to do.

Meanwhile, her stepsister, who was ugly and lazy, played all day long in the garden. She could do whatever she liked.

Not far away from their house was a stream, which was full of fish. One day the stepmother said to Tam and Cam, "Go to the stream and catch some fish for dinner. If you are lazy girls and do not catch any fish, I will punish you." Of course these words were only for Tam.

Tam and Cam each took a basket and set off toward the stream. All day long Tam sat in the hot sun and fished. By sunset, her basket was full of nice big fish. Meanwhile Cam played all day, in the shade of the trees. At sunset, her basket was still empty.

When it was time to go home, Cam thought of a trick. "You are all dirty," she said to Tam, "You should take a bath."

So Tam bathed in the stream. But when she was done, she saw that Cam had tricked her. Her own basket, which was full of nice big fish, was gone and Cam's empty basket was there. Cam was already home with Tam's basket of fish.

Poor little Tam sat down beside the stream and cried. Just then she looked up and there stood a beautiful lady, who was all dressed in blue. "Why are you crying, my Child?" the stranger asked her.

Tam told her about Cam's trick and why she was so unhappy.

"Look in your basket now," the lady in blue said to her, "What do you see now?"

There in the basket lay a big beautiful goldfish. "Take the goldfish home, keep it in the fishpond in the garden, and feed it three times each day." Then she suddenly disappeared.

Tam did what the lady had told her. But her mean stepmother saw her go to the fishpond every day. "Why do you go to the fishpond in the garden so often?" she asked.

"I must go to feed my goldfish, which lives in the pond," said Tam.

One day the stepmother sent Tam into the forest to gather wood. While the girl was gone, the mean stepmother caught the goldfish. That night, she killed it and cooked it and ate it for dinner.

Tam came home later that night and went to the garden to feed her goldfish, as usual. But she found no fish in the pond. Poor little Tam sat down and cried. Just then she looked up and there stood the beautiful stranger in blue. The lady said to her, "Why are you crying, my Child?"

Again Tam told her why she was unhappy.

"You must find the bones of the goldfish, wrap them carefully in paper and hide them under your mat in the kitchen. The goldfish was a magic fish and the magic bones will give you anything you wish for."

So Tam looked for the bones of the magic goldfish. At last she found them, where her stepmother had thrown them out. Tam washed the bones and carefully wrapped them in paper. Then she hid them under her mat in the kitchen.

Now and then Tam thought of the fishbones and made a small wish, which always came true. But still her stepmother was mean to her, and Tam still had to work hard every day, from sunrise to sunset.

Soon it was time for the King's party, which he had every year about this time. Tam asked to go too, but her stepmother said, "No, you must stay home and work. Sit there by the fireplace and sort these beans and rice." She gave Tam a big basket of beans mixed with rice to sort. Then she took Cam to town to buy a new dress for the King's party.

Poor little Tam was very sad. She wanted to go to the party, too.

Soon her stepmother and stepsister came back from town with beautiful new dresses, and they dressed for the party. But even in their new clothes, they were still ugly.

"Please, Stepmother, may I go too?" asked Tam.

"Yes, you can go after you finish separting the beans and rice." And she gave Tam another big basket of beans and rice to sort.

When her stepmother and Cam had left, Tam sat down beside the fireplace and cried. Just then she looked up and there stood the stranger, dressed in blue. "Why are you crying now, my Child? I will help you."

Suddenly all the forest birds, who were Tam's friends, flew in through the kitchen window. In a few minutes they sorted all the beans and rice. Then they sang "Good-bye, good-bye, Tam," and flew away.

"Now look under your mat in the kitchen," said the stranger. Tam went to the place in the kitchen where she slept and looked under her mat. There, where the magic fishbones had been, was a beautiful blue dress, all trimmed with silver. There, too, was a pair of little silk slippers.

The slippers and the dress fit Tam perfectly. How pretty she looked! She wanted to thank the lady, but the stranger had already disappeared. Quickly, Tam set out for the party.

When she walked into the palace, everyone looked at her. No one had seen this girl before. No one knew who this pretty stranger was. What was her name? They all thought she must be a princess, who lived in a faraway land.

The King fell in love at first sight. He asked Tam to dance with him. But just then, Tam saw her stepmother and stepsister, who were looking at her. Tam was afraid they knew who she was. So she ran away, through the King's gardens and down the road. But as she ran away, she lost one of the little silk slippers.

The King found the slipper and picked it up. "I must find that beautiful young woman," he said. "Whoever this little silk slipper fits, shall be my wife. She shall be queen of all the land."

But the little slipper didn't fit any of the ladies at the party. They tried and tried, but their feet were just too big. All of the ladies in the land tried on the slipper, but it was too small to fit any of them. Last of all, Tam had a chance to try it on, and--what do you think?--the slipper fit her perfectly. Tam slowly took another slipper out of her pocket and put it on the other foot.

Suddenly Tam stood there, in her blue dress trimmed in silver. The little silk slippers were on her feet. She looked like a princess indeed. The King took her home to his palace. And soon there was a big wedding feast.

Tam was a good wife and a good queen. All the people in the land loved their King and Queen. Together, they were very happy.

But Cam and the mean stepmother were never seen again.

E. BETEL

A long time ago there lived a wealthy man, named Cao. He and his wife lived in a big house with a beautiful garden. On one side of the house were green fields of rice. On the other side was the forest.

Now Cao had two sons, Tan and Lang. All together they were a very happy family. Tan and Lang were as alike as two brothers can be. They looked alike and talked alike and walked alike. They were best friends and went everywhere together.

Suddenly tragedy struck their happy home. One night their house caught on fire. Tan and Lang were afraid of the tall red flames, and they ran into the forest. When they came back, their mother and father had been killed and their house ruined by the fire. Even the fields of rice were all black. Alone and with no money, the two brothers set out together. They walked and walked.

After a while, they came to the house of a wealthy and generous man, named Lun. Lun had been a friend of their father. When he heard their sad story, he took them into his own home. There they were treated like part of the family.

Now Lun had no sons of his own, but he had one daughter, who was very beautiful. Lun wanted his daughter to marry one of the sons of Cao. But they were so much alike, he did not know which one should become her husband. Both of the brothers had fallen in love with the young woman. But since they were best friends, neither brother wanted to make the other unhappy. Lang said, "Tan, you may have her for your wife," and Tan said, "No, my Brother, you may marry her."

What should be done? The father Lun thought and thought. Then he said, "My daughter should marry the older brother." But they looked so very much alike, that he didn't know which of the two was the elder. Then he thought of a plan.

Lun asked the two brothers to a feast. A fine soup was brought to the table in small bowls. One bowl was put in front of Tan and the second bowl was put in front of Lang. But they were given only one

pair of chopsticks, which was set between them. At once Lang, who was indeed the younger brother, picked up the chopsticks and gave them to Tan. This was the custom in Vietnam. Then Lun knew that Tan was the older brother.

So he said, "Tan, you shall have my daughter's hand in marriage."

The brothers agreed that this was right and promised to remain friends. Soon there was a big wedding party. After the wedding, the father Lun, the two brothers, and the daughter of Lun still lived together in one house, just like before.

But things were not the same. Tan's love for his beautiful young wife grew every day, and they were together most of the time. Poor Lang was left alone. He soon grew very lonely. He loved both his brother and his brother's wife, but at last he saw that he must leave the house of Lun.

Early one morning, before the others were up, even before sunrise, he went out into the world alone.

He walked and walked and walked. He was so unhappy, he didn't even know where he was going. After a while, he came to a wide stream. He sat beside the stream for a long time and watched the sunset across the water. There he fell asleep and was changed into a big white stone.

When Tan got up the next morning, he saw that Lang had disappeared. Suddenly he understood why Lang had left. Tan was very sorry, and so he set out to find his brother. He walked and walked and walked, and at last he came to the wide stream. He had walked for a long time and was very tired. Looking for a place to rest, he saw the big white stone.

Meanwhile, Tan's young wife waited at home. But when he did not return, she set out to find him. She walked and walked and walked, and at last she came to the wide stream. She had walked for a long time and was very tired. Looking for a place to rest, she saw the tall nut tree, which grew beside the big white stone. There she sat down in the shade beside it. She soon fell asleep and was changed into a betel vine, which grew around the tall nut tree.

The people of the village heard this story and built a temple in honor of the three friends. And it was found that if the white stone

is crushed together with the leaves of the betel vine and the nuts of the tree, the mixture can be chewed. It tastes both bitter and sweet. The Vietnamese call it Betel.

Friends chewed betel together, in honor of the bittersweet friendship of Tan, Lang and the daughter of Lun. And this is still the custom today.